

August 31, 2023

Dear Peg,

I am fully aware (far more than you know) of the wrongs your mother did to you and probably all of her children, but especially what she did to you, and I try to keep this in the forefront of my mind at all times concerning family matters.

As for Mark, I am sure she again is the reason he is the way he is. She was one messed up person, and as result Mark was, is and remains one messed up person.

But as much as that is an excuse, it is also not an excuse. He grew up and supposedly became a thinking, functional person.

The trouble with Mark is no one ever called him on his shit (excuse my language). That should have been done a long time ago, but no one ever did it, or if they did do it, they did it too rarely. For all my life, the excuse whether from my grandmother, my mother, or you was "he means well."

Unfortunately, the old cliché, "the road to hell is paved with good intentions" is true.

But, again unfortunately, because no one ever bothered to explain anything about life, people's feelings or anything else to Mark, he remains an extremely twisted, sad human being who has lived an entire life and never had the slightest idea what life is about.

But this is why you now are in the situation you are in with him and his "stuff."

You showed him an act of kindness, in fact (to me) did what a sister or family member *should have done*, and his response was to do what he always has done, except this time even more outrageously and turn the third floor of your house and now what was once Ruthie's room into a complete and total disaster. And, as with the rest of his life, he got away with it. The man never had the slightest but of consideration for anyone else in his life. And the only thing that motivates him is guilt and most of the time not even that.

I never held you accountable for the theft of items from my childhood home. I always assumed it was Grandmom and Mark. Both of course

should have known better, but they were apparently without a conscience and driven by their own selfishness.

Your mother unfortunately never *got* that when a child moves out of the house and marries that that child is now on its own and starting its own family. She just never could fathom that. And as you well know, no one was good enough for any of her children, and no one of course could ever be possibly be good enough for Mark. And because she didn't get that, she took and took and took again what wasn't hers to take. And Mark went along with it. He didn't have the balls or the guts or the conscience to say to her this is *wrong*.

But Mark not only went along, he hoarded and kept, and *denied*. For almost 40 years he hoarded and kept, and then had the audacity to dole out to me in bits and pieces what should have been mine and then had the additional audacity to expect me to be grateful. If this was a legal case, he would be an "accessory," because something very wrong was going on and he did nothing to stop it, and in fact, aided, abetted and perpetuated it.

When I saw that yearbook sitting in the table in your foyer, I knew what it was *immediately*. And many times over the years I wondered what had happened to it. But for whatever reason it never occurred to me, never dawned on me that this too was among the "taken" items with the pots, the pans, the glasses, and everything else. But this, this was something I *knew* without any doubt was in my house. This was a book I had looked at many times when I was a kid. And so it hit me more powerfully than ever just what wrongs were committed.

Your mother and your brother could only think that they lost a daughter and a sister and their reaction was selfishness at its maximum. They didn't ever once stop to think about the two children who had lost a mother (in my view a far more horrible occurrence, as painful as losing any family member can be) and oh so typical of them, they didn't even consider the husband who lost a wife, not to mention a soulmate and the love of his life. Because they didn't know about a soulmate, and they didn't know about love, and they didn't know what a family is. Instead, they thought only of *themselves*. Their *loss* as if no one else had *lost anything*.